

**Thomas Jefferson to James Monroe, July 15, 1802, from  
The Works of Thomas Jefferson in Twelve Volumes.  
Federal Edition. Collected and Edited by Paul Leicester  
Ford.**

**TO JAMES MONROE J. MSS.**

Washington, July 15, 1802.

Dear Sir, —Your favor of the 7th has been duly received. I am really mortified at the base ingratitude of Callender. It presents human nature in a hideous form. It gives me concern because I perceive that relief, which was afforded him on mere motives of charity, may be viewed under the aspect of employing him as a writer. When the *political progress of Britain* first appeared in this country it was in a periodical publication called the *bee*, where I saw it. I was speaking of it in terms of strong approbation to a friend in Philadelphia, when he asked me if I knew that the author was then in the city, a fugitive from prosecution on account of that work, and in want of employ for his subsistence. This was the first of my learning that Callender was author of the work. I considered him as a man of science fled from persecution, and assured my friend of my readiness to do whatever could serve him. It was long after this before I saw him, probably not till 1798. He had in the mean time written a 2nd part of the *political progress* much inferior to the first, and his history of the U. S. In 1798, I think I was applied to by Mr Leiper to contribute to his relief. I did so. In 1799, I think S. T. Mason applied for him. I contributed again. He had by this time paid me two or three personal visits. When he fled in a panic from Philadelphia to Genl Mason's, he wrote to me that he was a fugitive, in want of employ, wished to know if he could get into a counting house, or a school in my neighborhood or in that of Richmond; that he had materials for a volume, and if he could get as much money as would buy the paper,

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the profit of the sale would be all his own. I availed myself of this pretext to cover a mere charity, by desiring him to consider me a subscriber for as many copies of his book as the money inclosed (50 D.) amounted to; but to send me two copies only, as the others might lie till called for. But I discouraged his coming into my neighborhood. His first writings here had fallen far short of his original *political progress* and the scurrilities of his subsequent ones began evidently to do mischief. As to myself

no man wished more to see his pen stopped: but I considered him still as a proper object of benevolence. The succeeding year he again wanted money to buy paper for another volume. I made his letter, as before, the occasion of giving him another 50 D. He considers these as proofs of my approbation of his writings, when they were mere charities, yielded under a strong conviction that he was injuring us by his writings. It is known to many that the sums given to him were such and even smaller than I was in the habit of giving to others in distress of the federal as well as the republican party without attention to political principles. Soon after I was elected to the government, Callender came on here wishing to be made postmaster at Richmond. I knew him to be totally unfit for it: and however ready I was to aid him with my own charities (and I then gave him 50. D.) I did not think the public offices confided to me to give away as charities. He took it in mortal offence, and from that moment has been hauling off to his former enemies the federalists. Under the letter I wrote him in answer to the one from Genl. Mason, I wrote him another containing answers to two questions he addressed to me. 1. whether Mr. Jay received salary as chief justice and envoy at the same time; and 2. something relative to the expenses of an embassy to Constantinople. I think these were the only letters I ever wrote him in answer to volumes he was perpetually writing to me. This is the true state of what has passed between him and me. I do not know that it can be used without committing me in controversy as it were with one too little respected by the public to merit that notice. I leave to your judgment what use can be made of these facts. Perhaps it will be better judged of when we see what use the tories will endeavour to make of their new friend. I shall leave this on the 21st and be

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at Monticello probably on the 24th or between 2. or 3. days of that, and shall hope ere long to see you there. Accept assurances of my affectionate attachment.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> On this subject, Jefferson further wrote to Monroe:

“Washington, July 17, 1802.

“Dear Sir,—After writing you on the 15th I turned to my letter file to see what letters I had written to Callender and found them to have been of the dates of 1798 Oct. 11. and 1799 Sept. 6. and Oct. 6. But on looking for the letters they were not in their places nor to be found. On recollection I believe I sent them to you a year or two ago. If you have them, I shall be glad to receive them at Monticello where I shall be on this day sennight. I inclose you a paper which shows the Tories mean to pervert these charities to Callender as much as they can. They will probably first represent me as the patron and support of the Prospect before us, and other things of Callender's, and then picking out all the scurrilities of the author against Genl. Washington, Mr. Adams and others impute them to me. I as well as most other republicans who were in the way of doing it, contributed what I could afford to the support of the republican papers and printers, paid sums of money for the *bee*, the Albany *register* &c. when they were staggering under the sedition law, contributed to the fines of Callender himself, of Holt, Brown and others suffering under that law. I discharged, when I came into office, such as were under the persecution of our enemies, without instituting any prosecutions in retaliation. They may therefore, with the same justice, impute to me, or to every republican contributor, everything which was ever published in those papers or by those persons. I must correct a fact in mine of the 15th. I find I did not enclose the 50 D. to Callender himself while at Genl. Mason's, but authorized the Genl. to draw on my correspondt, at Richmond and to give the money to Callender. So the other 50. D. of which he speaks were by order on my correspondt, at Richmond. Accept assurances of my affectionate esteem and respect.”